

February 11, 2020

DOH-PINELLAS RECOGNIZES THE PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT AS A TOBACCO FREE WORKSITE



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Clearwater, FL – The Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County (DOH-Pinellas) Tobacco Free Florida Program works with local businesses to assist them in creating and strengthening their tobacco policies for greater health and wellness.

To kick off 2020, the DOH-Pinellas Tobacco Program is recognizing Pinellas County Schools for outstanding efforts to protect students and teachers from secondhand smoke. The Pinellas County School District is a Tobacco Free Worksite (TFW) and has established the 12 components required for schools within the state, which are:

1. Policy includes a statement of rationale for the policy and definitions of tobacco and tobacco use.
2. Tobacco is specifically named; not implied by prohibiting drugs.
3. All components of the policy are effective 24 hours a day; 365 days per year.
4. All school buildings, grounds, campuses, housing, property (including vehicles and buses, whether owned or leased) are tobacco free at all times.
5. Students are prohibited from possessing and/or using tobacco products on school grounds, at school events, whether on or off district property.
6. School staff are prohibited from using tobacco products on school grounds, at school events, whether on or off district property.
7. Visitors are prohibited from using tobacco products on school grounds, at school events, whether on or off district property.
8. Wearing clothing or using other items that advertise or promote tobacco products is prohibited.
9. Tobacco advertising and acceptance of gifts, including curriculum, from tobacco companies is prohibited.
10. A plan to communicate the policy to all students, employees and visitors is outlined.
11. An enforcement plan for students, staff and visitors is outlined.
12. An enforcement plan for students and staff that provides cessation resources is outlined.

The district also hosts Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) clubs that are working towards a tobacco free future. Students in SWAT are empowered to mobilize, educate, and equip their peers to revolt against and deglamorize Big Tobacco.

In addition, Pinellas County Schools is one of only three school districts in the state to receive the Florida Tobacco Cessation Gold Award for providing top class tobacco cessation treatments to faculty and staff.

In response to the youth vaping epidemic, Pinellas County Schools recently updated the existing tobacco free policy to include e-cigarettes/vaping and is taking aggressive measures to prevent it on school grounds.

Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable disease and death in Florida and the U.S. On average, smokers die 10 years earlier than nonsmokers. For every person who dies, at least 30 people live with a serious smoking-related illness. About 30 percent of cancer deaths in Florida are caused by cigarette smoking. Smoking not only affects one's health, it also impacts individuals financially. A pack-a-day smoker in Florida can spend more than \$2,100 in just one year and more than \$10,500 in five years.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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About Tobacco Free Florida

The department's Tobacco Free Florida campaign is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund. Since the program began in 2007, more than 234,000 Floridians have successfully quit using one of Tobacco Free Florida's free tools and services. There are now approximately 451,000 fewer adult smokers in Florida than there was 10 years ago, and the state has saved \$17.7 billion in health care costs. To learn more about Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way services, visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com or follow the campaign on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida or on Twitter at www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla.